

Abroad

Managua

Looking East

Nicaragua has just concluded a \$140-million trade agreement with Bulgaria to finance industrial and agricultural projects, a deal that powerfully boosts Nicaraguan trade with the Eastern bloc. The money will be used to buy machinery and equipment to build, among other things, a deep-water port on Nicaragua's Atlantic coast. Trade between Nicaragua and Eastern Europe was almost nonexistent until the Sandinista revolution in 1979. At first, East Germany was the leading trading partner, to the tune of about \$20 million a year. Then last May a bilateral agreement worth \$2 billion was signed with the Soviet Union—half for machinery credits and the rest for telecommunication, health, and hydroelectric projects. An important feature of these deals is their financing. Like most underdeveloped countries, Nicaragua has a big foreign-trade deficit, in this case an annual \$400 million, and those governments that offer credit find the Nicaraguans most responsive.

Paris

Retro Feminism

Simone de Beauvoir at 75 remains a landmark in the history of twentieth century feminism. Interviewed the other day as to whether the public does not perceive the women's movement as having flagged since its successes of the last decade, she commented: "No, it is less brilliant, less scandalous, because the 1970s were when the explosions occurred, but I don't think the movement is either dead or decrepit. Perhaps in the United States, but not in France. Over there, I believe there has been a terrible retrogression, not only because of Reagan, but because of the new feminism. Women are now being asked to abandon the fight and to return to the traditional values of the difference between men and women; to the vocation of the woman; of the wife or the mother; of devotion and so on. The new American feminism is very dangerous, for it is a return to the *éternel féminin*."

Naples

Eruption

In a scene reminiscent of *The Godfather*, Valentino Gionta, one of the chieftains of the Camorra, the Neapolitan version of the Mafia, prepared a banquet in honor of the First Communion of his two children. A stylish country restaurant at the foot of Mount Vesuvius was booked; five hundred guests were invited; dancing was to last until dawn. On the appointed day, limousines duly arrived with his guests and their bodyguards, who discreetly concealed their pistols and submachine guns under the folds of the tablecloths. The band struck up, and the company settled down to a sumptuous meal. Gionta, who is the brains of an extortion racket, was most anxious to impress his Camorra rivals with this display of wealth and power. But the police, in the form of a strong force of carabinieri and plainclothes detectives, had decided the party would be an ideal moment to seize long-wanted suspects for illegal possession of firearms. Bursting through the ranks of the orchestra,

the lawmen swooped down on the guests. As platters of antipasto went flying—the meal had only just begun—the bodyguards jumped out the windows and otherwise fled for cover. Gionta was among the first to be arrested and charged with "abusive possession of warlike weapons." The haul particularly interested in Neapolitan police ballistic experts, who plan to see how many of the weapons can be matched up with unsolved crimes.

Portsmouth

Final Ecumenism

One of the unforeseen problems attendant on the raising of the *Mary Rose*, the Tudor warship that sank in Portsmouth harbor more than four hundred years ago with all hands aboard, is the burial of the two hundred or more sailors who perished on that first sortie against the French fleet. Where should they be laid to rest and how? They cannot simply be committed to the sea where they had drowned, because the water is too shallow and their shrouds might catch in the propellers of harbor shipping. A suitable site is being sought on land, possibly an old castle overlooking the harbor. Even more vexing is the nature of the funeral rite, which presents a nice ecumenical puzzle. When the ship sank in 1545, King Henry VIII had long since broken with the Pope and declared himself head of the Church of England, so the sailors in his service would have been considered Anglicans. But Henry desired to keep the Roman liturgy unchanged, his quarrel being political and not doctrinal, and therefore the burial service of the *Mary Rose*'s crew will be in the Latin of the Old Sarum rite, the version of the Roman liturgy then used in England. However, since there had been a beginning of vernacular translation—an English Lord's Prayer and a portion of the Litany were extant in 1545—there will be some English elements in the service, according to the Very Reverend David Stancliffe, Provost of Portsmouth Cathedral. "The lessons will be read in English and the bidding prayer and the Lord's Prayer," he explained, "but the Ordinary of the Mass will be in Latin together with the proper antiphons," set to sixteenth century music. The committal will be taken from the modern English prayer book. The Provost added that the service, to be attended by Roman Catholics, represents "an invitation to reconciliation which would have hardly seemed conceivable in Henry's time."



Buzz, Purch

"There must be more to life than just avoiding herpes."